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I
OUR DEBT TO FRANCE

II
WHAT LAFAYETTE DID
FOR AMERICA

Dedicated to the Fatherless
Children of France

BY
JAMES HOSMER PENNIMAN, LITT. D.

Filed

"Among all the innumerable expressions of sympathy, all the kindnesses showered by you on France, none touches us so deeply as what you are doing for the orphans of our heroic dead. Our children are our most precious possession, our joy and our hope, and there is no surer way to our hearts than to help these pitiful victims of this war for the liberation of the world."

—Marshal Joffre.

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I

OUR DEBT TO FRANCE

Washington weighed his words when he wrote that our obligation to France calls for "the most unalterable gratitude," and Joseph Choate said that he could find no language adequate to express what America owes to France. Though the great actors in the drama of our Revolution sleep in the fields of silence, their deeds remain eloquent, and it is well to recall their words, which are so modest when they tell of their own actions and so generous and appreciative when they describe those of their allies. They make it perfectly clear that France came in our hour of supreme need and exerted the determining influence, when our armies and our credit were all but exhausted by the long struggle.

Early in 1776 Congress sent Silas Deane, a graduate of Yale of the class of 1758, as commissioner to France to propose an offensive and defensive alliance and a treaty of commerce. Vergennes, the Minister of Foreign Affairs, received Deane with cordiality and benevolence and told him to consider himself under the immediate protection of the King of France, and in case of any insult or molestation to complain directly to himself and to depend on receiving the most satisfactory redress; that, though talk of an alliance was premature, his government would show its good will by allowing the Americans to purchase supplies secretly.

There was then no factory in America where muskets or cannon could be made in any quantity, and it was almost impossible to obtain gunpowder. July 20th Deane had another interview by appointment at Versailles with Vergennes and was promised 40,000 muskets. Vergennes also proposed to have the arms of France erased from 200 brass cannon, if it could be done without weakening them, and if not he promised that others should be cast in the King's foundries. Vergennes sent De Chaumont, a wealthy man, to Deane with priced samples of the uniforms worn in the French army, and De Chaumont voluntarily offered to become security to the amount of 1,000,000 francs for the purchase of clothing for the Americans.

Vergennes's knowledge of European politics was considered superior to that of any other man of his time, so that the services which he was able to render to America were of inestimable value. When Vergennes died in 1788, Franklin said that it was a great loss to France, to Europe, to America and to mankind.

The decision to aid America was largely due to the efforts of that extraordinary Frenchman, Beaumarchais, well known as the author of the "Barber of Seville" and the "Marriage of Figaro." Beaumarchais is comparable to Sheridan in wit, stagecraft and in his ability to satirize the follies of his time, and his polemical papers resemble those of Swift. Through his writings he had become a leader of public opinion. In the "Marriage of Figaro" he showed clearly the dangerous condition of France. He first made plain that the balance of power in Europe was to be found in America. As early as September, 1775, Beaumarchais declared that America was lost to the mother country, and early in 1776 he urged the King of France to give secret aid to the Americans, saying, "If your majesty has no more skillful man to employ, I am ready to take the matter in charge and will be responsible for the treaty without compromising any one, persuaded that my zeal will better supplement my

lack of dexterity than the dexterity of another could replace my zeal. The Americans are as well placed as possible; army, fleet, provisions, courage, everything is excellent; but without powder and engineers how can they conquer or how even can they defend themselves? Are we willing to let them perish rather than loan them one or two millions? Are we afraid of losing the money?"

With the connivance of Vergennes, Beaumarchais organized the commercial firm of Hortalez & Co. "You will found your house," he was instructed, "and at your own risk and perils you will provision the Americans with arms and munitions and objects of equipment and whatever is necessary to support the war. You shall not demand money of the Americans, because they have none, but you shall ask returns in commodities of their soil, the sale of which we will facilitate in our country." American tobacco, rice and wheat were then especially valuable in Europe. Agents of Beaumarchais met the captains of American ships on their arrival in France, aided them to dispose of their cargoes and rendered any other services in their power. For instance, when five vessels arrived from America with fish, a prohibited article, the French officials informed Deane that if the vessels came from Congress they should be permitted to unload and to sell their cargoes.

May 2, 1776, the French Government advanced to Beaumarchais 1,000,000 francs for the purchase of supplies for the Americans, and two months later he received another million from Spain, which was paid through the treasury of France. Within a year Beaumarchais had sent eight shiploads of military stores, drawn largely from royal arsenals and valued at more than 6,000,000 francs. For a long time he was the exclusive agent of France, and through him supplies were sent without which Washington's forces could not have existed. Beaumarchais obtained over 200 cannon, 25,000 muskets, 200,000 pounds of powder, 20

or 30 brass mortars and clothing and tents for 25,000 men. These he loaded on ships obtained by himself. At one time he fitted out ten merchantmen and equipped a man-of-war to escort them. Silas Deane wrote Congress, "I should have never completed what I have but for the generous, the indefatigable and spirited exertions of Monsieur Beaumarchais, to whom the United States are on every account greatly indebted; more so than to any other person on this side of the water." When Beaumarchais was himself struggling with financial difficulties, he wrote: "Through all these annoyances the news from America overwhelms me with joy. Brave, brave people, their warlike conduct justifies my esteem and the noble enthusiasm felt for them in France."

Though Franklin was seventy when Congress unanimously elected him on the first ballot a commissioner to France, there is no exaggeration in saying that his services surpass those of any other American diplomat in any period of our history. Afflicted with the infirmities of age, his mind remained bright, his good nature undiminished and he cheerfully undertook the dangerous voyage in order to serve his country. He came on the *Reprisal*, which made the trip from land to land in thirty days. It carried indigo for the account of Congress worth £3000. On the way over it captured two British ships worth £4000.

Franklin arrived in Paris in December, 1776. At first he took lodgings in the Rue de l'Universit e, but in a few days he withdrew to Passy, where he lived nine years. Franklin described his residence as "a fine house, situated in a neat village on high ground, half a mile from Paris, with a large garden to walk in." The house was the property of De Chaumont, who wrote John Adams in September, 1778, "when I consecrated my house to Doctor Franklin and his associates who might live with him, I made it fully understood that I should expect no compensation, because I perceived that you had need of all your means to send

to the succor of your country or to relieve the distresses of your countrymen escaping from the chains of their enemies. I pray you, sir, to permit this arrangement to remain, which I made when the fate of your country was doubtful. When she shall enjoy all her splendor such sacrifices on my part will be superfluous or unworthy of her; but at present they may be useful, and I am happy in offering them to you." He added that it was a good thing "to have immortalized my house by receiving into it Doctor Franklin and his associates."

That a man of such erudition and distinction as Franklin should come from the colonies was a paradox which delighted French society. The wit of his writing was particularly appreciated; the sayings of "le bon-homme Richard" were quoted all over France, and the clergy advised the people to take them to heart. France was filled with medals, busts and pictures of Franklin, so that he wrote his daughter that the numbers sold were incredible and "have made your father's face as well known as the moon." Among the powdered heads of Paris he wore his own gray hair, a fur cap and spectacles, but the old man in his brown suit made more impression than the most glittering ambassador.

Long before their government took up our cause most Frenchmen individually sympathized with us, so that in order to preserve the semblance of neutrality, it was necessary to prohibit the discussion of the war in the cafes of Paris. Republican literature was widely read, and the Declaration of Independence was received with enthusiasm. John Adams wrote of the French in 1778: "There is no people in the world who take so much pains to please, nor any whose endeavors in this way have more success. Their arts and manners, taste and language, are more respected in Europe than those of any other nation." Buckle states: "More new truths concerning the external world were discovered in France during the latter part of the eighteenth century than during all the previous periods put

together." People crowded to lectures on chemistry and physics as if they were plays. Franklin was a member of the French Academy of Sciences and attended its meetings regularly, and his experiments with the kite were as well known in Paris as in Philadelphia.

Distinguished as a man of science, a man of letters and a man of broad humanity, Franklin was learned above all other men in the philosophy of life, and he had attained a ripe old age without losing faith in mankind. He found his happiness in that of his fellow-men. He was equally at home with common men and with scholars and princes, for he was able to comprehend every one's point of view. No man understood the present better than he, and few had a more prophetic vision into the future. A keen observer, of wisdom, judgment and sagacity, he did his work so easily that it seemed easy work until some one else tried to do it. He had snatched the lightning from the clouds, and was now doing his utmost to wrest the scepter of the thirteen colonies from the tyrant.

Ten days after Franklin's arrival he had a secret interview with Vergennes, who was charmed by his tact and courtesy and said that his conduct was as zealous and patriotic as it was wise and circumspect. Franklin's unswerving loyalty to France in spite of the snares and temptations which were artfully laid for him by our enemies was equaled only by his inflexible devotion to his native land. Before Franklin left for France he had loaned Congress all his available fortune, and during the years of his stay in France the closest scrutiny failed to reveal a single instance of his mismanagement of the public funds. Instead of sending money to its diplomats, the United States drew bills on them. Franklin was able not only to meet the drafts on himself, but was also able to help his colleagues, who were accredited to other courts. He knew how to bide his time; it was sometimes months before the American diplomats could hear from home. For instance,

Burgoyne surrendered the 17th of October, 1777, but it was not until the 4th of December that the information reached Paris, where it caused as much rejoicing as if it had been a French victory. Beaumarchais drove with such furious speed to carry the news that his carriage upset, his arm was cut, and the bones of his neck nearly crushed, but he wrote: "The charming news from America is balm to my wounds."

The surrender of Burgoyne, added to the fact that the American army made an excellent showing at Germantown, so soon after the defeat at the Brandywine, decided the French government to espouse our cause openly. December 12th Vergennes said of the battle of Germantown, "Nothing has struck me so much as General Washington attacking and giving battle to General Howe's army. To bring troops raised within the year to do this promises everything."

December 17th, as Washington was preparing to go into winter quarters at Valley Forge, though the prospect in America was dark, a bright star of hope arose for us in France, for on that day Gerard, a secretary of Vergennes, who later became the first minister of France to the United States, and to whom our country is indebted for constant and efficient efforts in our behalf, officially informed Franklin and Deane that France had determined not only to acknowledge, but also to support the independence of America. The most important treaties in American history are, that with France, signed February 6, 1778, and those with Great Britain, which ended the war of the Revolution. The treaty with France was the first the United States made with any nation. It stated:

"The essential and direct end of the present defensive alliance is to maintain effectually the liberty, sovereignty, and independence absolute and unlimited of the said United States."

France and the United States mutually engaged not to lay down their arms until this independence should have been assured by the treaty that should

terminate the war. Though France could have driven a hard bargain, her only desire was the perpetual friendship of the United States, so that Franklin wrote: "France has taken no advantage of our present difficulties to exact terms which we would not willingly grant when established in prosperity and power."

The French alliance was celebrated by Washington's army at Valley Forge, May 5th. The brigades assembled at 9 o'clock, their chaplains made the announcement, offered up a thanksgiving and delivered a suitable discourse. At half-past ten a cannon gave the signal to line up for inspection, thirteen guns were fired, there was a running salute of infantry throughout the whole line and at a given signal, the entire army cheered, "Long live the King of France!"

An officer wrote: "Last Wednesday was set apart as a day of general rejoicing, when we had a feu de joie conducted with the greatest order and regularity. The army made a most brilliant appearance; after which his Excellency dined in public, attended by a band of music. I never was present where there was such unfeigned and perfect joy as was discovered in every countenance. The entertainment was concluded with a number of patriotic toasts, attended with hurrahs. When the General took his leave there was a universal clap, with loud hurrahs, which continued till he had proceeded a quarter of a mile, during which time there was a thousand hats tossed in the air. His Excellency turned round with his retinue and hurrahed several times."

It is interesting to note that there were two opposite causes during the Revolution which made Washington exhibit violent emotion; one was cowardice and the failure of his men to do their duty, the other was the devotion of France.

The alliance between France and the United States was of course a cause of war between France and Great Britain, and April 13, 1778, five weeks after the signing of the treaty of alliance, Admiral D'Estaing left Toulon

for America with twelve ships of the line and four frigates. He was delayed by adverse winds and did not reach the Delaware Capes till July 8th. The British, who had spent the winter in Philadelphia, had evacuated the city June 18th, so that D'Estaing found that their fleet had escaped to New York. He followed them, but, though his ships were superior to the British then in New York, they drew too much water to cross the bar. He then proceeded to Newport. When D'Estaing appeared in Narragansett Bay the British burned the following frigates to prevent their capture by the French: Juno 32, Lark 32, Orpheus 32, Cerberus 32, Kingfisher 16; and the Flora 32 and Falcon 18 were sunk. Admiral Howe, having been reinforced, left New York August 6th with eight ships of the line, five 50s, two 44s and a number of smaller vessels. D'Estaing sailed out to battle with him, but a violent storm separated the two fleets. The French were obliged to go to Boston for repairs, and the American troops, deprived of the protection of the French fleet, had to abandon Rhode Island.

During the Revolution Washington had important victories snatched from him by combinations of circumstances which he could not anticipate or control, so that the following sympathetic letter which he wrote D'Estaing September 11, 1778, might have been written after Germantown or Monmouth to the commander-in-chief instead of by him:

"If the deepest regret that the best concerted enterprise and bravest exertions should have been rendered fruitless by a disaster which human prudence is incapable of foreseeing or preventing can alleviate disappointment, you may be assured that the whole continent sympathizes with you. It will be a consolation to you to reflect that the thinking part of mankind do not form their judgment from events and that their equity will ever attach equal glory to those actions which deserve success as to those which have been crowned with it. It is in the trying circumstances to which

your excellency has been exposed that the virtues of a great mind are displayed in their brightest lustre and that the general's character is better known than in the moment of victory. It was yours by every title which can give it, and the adverse element which robbed you of your prize can never deprive you of the glory due to you. Though your success has not been equal to your expectations, yet you have the satisfaction of reflecting that you have rendered essential services to the common cause."

D'Estaing proceeded to the West Indies, where his operations kept busy forces which otherwise would have been employed against the United States, and the British were obliged also to send there 5000 men from New York. Lafayette wrote Washington that the news of the fleet of D'Estaing "occasioned the evacuation of Philadelphia. Its arrival has opened all the harbors, secured all the coasts, obliged the British navy to be together."

D'Estaing brought with him our friend Gerard, who was the first minister of any foreign power to the United States. France sent him in a manner worthy of a great nation, for he embarked on the Languedoc, D'Estaing's flagship. Few of those who see in Philadelphia the portrait of Gerard, the first of the long line of distinguished diplomats who have represented France in the United States, know that before he went home Congress requested that his portrait be hung in its halls, so that we might keep reminded of his services to our country. La Luzerne succeeded Gerard in the fall of 1779 and represented France with ability and courtesy for five critical years. With Gerard came Silas Deane, who, though he had made enemies, had served our country so faithfully in France that Franklin wrote the President of Congress: "Having lived intimately with him now fifteen months, the greatest part of the time in the same house, and been a constant witness of his public conduct, I cannot omit giving this testimony, though unasked, in his

behalf, that I esteem him a faithful, active and able minister, who, to my knowledge, has done in various ways great and important services to his country."

September 1, 1779, D'Estaing came a second time, arriving on the coast of Georgia with twenty-two ships of the line and eleven frigates. In October an allied force of about 6000, two-thirds of which were French, attacked Savannah with great gallantry. The city was invested and its fortifications were bombarded by the French fleet. October 9th an assault was made, the outworks were carried and the French and American flags placed on the ramparts, but the allies were finally repulsed with the loss of about 1000, among them the gallant Pulaski. D'Estaing was severely wounded twice. Fifteen French officers and 168 men were killed, 43 officers and 411 men wounded. Though D'Estaing had been prevented from doing all that he wished, he had done his best with the utmost bravery, and there was great harmony between the allies. D'Estaing said, "My duty before all else was to prove to the new allies of his majesty that we were ready to sacrifice everything in order to keep a promise that we had once made."

On his return to France he rendered great service to America by urging his government to increase its efforts in our behalf. Of D'Estaing Lafayette wrote: "He is a man whose genius and talents and great qualities of heart and mind I admire as much as I love his virtues, his patriotism and his amiability. He has suffered every possible reverse and he has not been able to accomplish what he hoped for; but he is, to my mind, a man made to be intrusted with the interests of a nation like ours."

Rochambeau was a representative soldier of France, that nation of great soldiers. One of the most experienced officers in the French army, his name attracted distinguished men to serve under him. Like Washington, Rochambeau was personally brave to the point of rashness, grave, reticent, a strict disci-

plinarian, but beloved by his men. Like Washington, Rochambeau had been made a colonel at twenty-two. He had won successive promotions by his brilliant deeds on the field of battle. In 1780 he had seen thirty-eight years of service and had attained the rank of lieutenant general. He was proud of saying that of the 15,000 soldiers who had fallen gloriously under his command he could not reproach himself for the death of any one. Before Rochambeau departed for America the French government had advanced 8,000,000 francs for the expedition. May 2, 1782, Admiral de Ternay sailed with six ships of the line and five frigates, thirty-two transports and a hospital ship. In order to carry more men Rochambeau was even obliged to leave his beloved warhorses. He was able to take with him only 5500 soldiers. Those who were left behind were bitterly disappointed. Rochambeau commanded the elite of the French army, composed of the ancient and distinguished regiments, Bourbonnais, Soissonnais, Saintong and Royal Deux-Ponts. The Bourbonnais regiment was the seventh in age in the French infantry, having been organized in 1595. Two regiments came from places notable in the recent world war, the Soissonnais and the Royal Deux-Ponts, the latter having been recruited in Alsace. The Duc de Lauzun, an author and one of the most elegant men of France, commanded a Legion of Foreign Volunteers, consisting of 800 infantry and 400 cavalry, part of whom had to be left in France for lack of transports. The French officers were noted for military experience and nearly all were noblemen. To enumerate them and to tell of their deeds and of their descent would be to rewrite the history of France. I can name merely a few. Next to Rochambeau in rank were the brothers Viomenil, both of whom were major generals, as was also Chevalier de Chastellux, whose literary work afterward won him a place in the French Academy. Berthier's extraordinary ability in arranging and carrying out military details made

him later Napoleon's chief of staff, and Napoleon created him Prince of Wagram; Dumas became a general under Napoleon; Montesquieu was the grandson of the author of "L'Esprit des Lois"; Count de Vauban was a grandson of the great military engineer, and Count de Segur wrote memoirs of the American Revolution and of Napoleon. The colonel of the Bourbonnais was the Marquis de Laval-Montmorency, and Rochambeau's son, the Vicomte de Rochambeau, was lieutenant colonel.

Lafayette wrote Washington November 13, 1780: "The Marquis de Laval Montmorency, of one of the most illustrious families in France, is on his way to the camp. The Chevalier de Chastellux, a relation and friend of mine, major general in the French army, is also coming. I every day expect my brother-in-law and his friend, Count de Charlus, only son to the Marquis de Castries, who enjoys a great consideration in France and has won the battle of Closter Camp. The Duke of Lauzun has also written to me that he would come soon. These five gentlemen may by their eminence at home be considered as the first people in the French army." The colonel of the Soissannais was the Count de Saint-Maime, and Lafayette's brother-in-law, Vicomte de Noailles, was lieutenant colonel. He distinguished himself by walking the entire distance from Newport to Yorktown, 756 miles. Comte de Custine commanded the Saintonge. The brothers Deux-Ponts commanded the Royal Deux-Ponts.

There is nothing in the history of our relations with France more impressive than the fact that Rochambeau's orders were that the French army should be under the command of Washington, "to whom the honors of a marshal of France will be rendered." No one in Rochambeau's army had such a rank. It was also ordered that "in case of an equality of rank and of duration of service, the American officer will take command."

In spite of the British navy, Admiral Ternay brought Rochambeau's force safely over, and they reached Newport July 10th, after a voyage of seventy days. July 12th Rochambeau wrote Washington: "I am arrived full of submission and zeal and of veneration for yourself and for the talents you have shown in sustaining a war that will be forever memorable." Rochambeau wrote the President of Congress: "We are your brothers and we shall act as such with you. We will fight your enemies by your side as if we were one and the same nation."

Questions of etiquette and precedence were easily settled by two such unselfish men as Washington and Rochambeau, and the only contest between the French and Americans was as to who should first storm the redoubts at Yorktown. Rochambeau states that during his entire stay in America there was not a blow nor a quarrel between any French and American soldier. The gay French officers submitted with perfect propriety to the simple life of the Americans. The companions of Lauzun are described as being tall, vivacious men with handsome faces and noble air. They were splendidly mounted and equipped. When Governor Trumbull at table, where twenty of them were seated, offered a long prayer, they attended with courtesy, and all joined in with the amen.

In 1781, at Newport, the French celebrated Washington's birthday by a parade, a salute and by a general holiday. This is said to have been the first public recognition of the day. French soldiers rendered themselves agreeable not only because of the politeness which characterizes their nation, but also because of the genuine interest which they felt in the American cause. Trees with apples growing on them overhung tents which the French had occupied for three months. The perfectly equipped army of France was proud to be allied with the ragged forces of Washington. The uniforms of the French army were the handsomest ever seen in America. The Deux-Ponts

wore white; the Saintong white faced with green; the Soissonnais white with rose facings and grenadier hats with white and rose plumes; the Bourbonnais black and red, and the artillery blue trimmed with red. The more ragged the American soldiers the warmer the sympathy of the French. Baron de Closen wrote: "These brave men were painful to see; almost naked, nothing but pantaloons and slight jacket of linen or cotton, the greater number without stockings; but—could it be believed?—in the best good humor in the world and all hearty in form and face. I am altogether in admiration of these American troops. It is incredible that troops composed of men of all ages, even lads of 15, of black and white, all half naked, can march so well and stand fire with such firmness." The Abbe Robin thus describes the Americans:

"The American troops have as yet no regular uniform. The officers and artillery corps alone are uniformed. Several regiments have small white fringed casaques, the effect of which is sightly enough; their wide, long, linen pantaloons neither incommode them nor interfere with the play of their limbs on the march, yet with a nourishment much less substantial than our own and a temperament much less vigorous, for this reason alone, perhaps, they support fatigue much better than our troops.

"These American garments, altho easily soiled, are nevertheless kept extremely clean. Their neatness is particularly observable among the officers. To see them you would suppose that they had a large amount of baggage, but I was surprised to find in their tents, which accommodate three or four persons, not as much as forty pounds' weight. Hardly any have mattresses, a single covering stretched on the knotty bark of trees serving them for bed."

A French officer wrote:

"The Americans gain more on my esteem as they are more known. I have met with the greatest integrity, civility and hospitality among them. Their mili-

tia have joined us. They are not clothed in any uniform and are in great want of shoes and even of the most common conveniences, which, if a European army was deficient in, a general desertion would follow. But the American troops are furnished with good arms, possess an incredible store of patience and preserve the most perfect sobriety. There are no more hardy soldiers, and the last four years have given incontestible proof of their valour."

Washington wrote Lafayette: "A decisive naval superiority is to be considered as a fundamental principle." For lack of this naval superiority the French army was forced to remain idle at Newport for eleven months. But though inactive, the French were far from useless, for Washington was ready to attack New York in case Clinton made a demonstration against Rochambeau at Newport, and the concentration of the British ships at Gardener's Bay, in order to watch the French army and navy at Newport, made it easy for the American privateers to take prizes, and gave freedom to American commerce. When it became certain that a powerful French fleet was about to co-operate with the land forces, the French army removed from Newport and joined Washington near New York, and the combined armies spent July and the first half of August a short distance north of the British lines. At Phillipsburg, twelve miles from Kingsbridge, July 6, 1781, Washington's orderly book states: "The commander-in-chief with pleasure embraces the earliest possible opportunity of expressing his thanks to his Excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, for the unremitting zeal with which he has prosecuted his march, in order to form the long-wished-for junction between the French and American forces, an event which must afford the highest degree of pleasure to every friend of his country, and from which the happiest consequences are to be expected."

In congratulating his army on the arrival of Rochambeau, Washington says in his orderly book: "The

generosity of this succour, and the manner in which it is given, is a new tie between France and America. The lively concern which our allies manifest for our safety and independence, has a claim to the affection of every virtuous citizen. The general with confidence assures the army that the officers and men of the French forces come to our aid, animated with a zeal founded in sentiment for us, as well as in duty to their prince, and that they will do everything in their power to promote harmony and cultivate friendship. He is equally persuaded that on our part we shall vie with them in their good dispositions, to which we are excited by gratitude as well as by the common interest."

While reconnoitering around New York, Washington commanded the admiration of the French by his perfect horsemanship and his coolness under fire. When the tide rose at Throg's Neck, they were obliged to swim their horses, as Washington so frequently had to do in his younger days, but this was quite new to Rochambeau. The officers were in the saddle for forty-eight hours and Count de Dumas had a horse shot under him.

Ambassador Jusserand, to whose learned studies we are greatly indebted, calls attention to the fact that his predecessor, La Luzerne, was the first to recognize the necessity of immediate action in the Chesapeake. As early as April 20th, Luzerne had written: "It is in Chesapeake Bay that it seems urgent to convey all the naval forces of the king, with such land forces as the generals will consider appropriate."

August 14, 1781, Washington states in his diary that he received dispatches from Count de Barras, announcing the intended departure of the Count de Grasse from Cape Francois with between twenty-five and twenty-nine sail of the line and 3200 land troops on the 3d instant for Chesapeake Bay, and the anxiety of the latter to have everything in the most perfect readiness to commence our operations in the moment of his

arrival, as he should be under a necessity from particular engagements with the Spaniards to be in the West Indies by the middle of October. "Matters having now come to a crisis, I was obliged, from the shortness of Count de Grasse's promised stay on this coast, to give up all idea of attacking New York; and instead thereof to remove the French troops and a detachment from the American army to the Head of Elk, to be transported to Virginia." August 16th Washington received word from Lafayette that Cornwallis had reached Yorktown on the 6th and was throwing up works. Washington took south 2000 Continentals and 4000 French. Washington and Rochambeau alone knew the destination. Every one else, the British included, thought that the allies would attack New York city by way of Staten Island. In order to enable the American army to march to Yorktown, Robert Morris borrowed \$30,000, \$20,000 of which was loaned by Rochambeau from his military chest. Morris promised to return this by October 1st, and was enabled to do so by the arrival from France of Colonel Laurens with a part of a donation of 6,000,000 francs given by the French government.

August 19th the united armies commenced their march to the south. On passing through Philadelphia the French army paid Congress the honors which had been ordered and the thirteen representatives of Congress took off their thirteen hats at each salute. At Chester, September 5th, Washington received information that De Grasse had arrived in the Chesapeake August 30th. This good news caused the commander-in-chief to give way to his feelings, as he had done at Valley Forge in celebrating the French alliance. Eyewitnesses relate that Washington stood on the bank of the Delaware waving his hat as Rochambeau approached. Lazun said that he had never seen a man more carried away with joy, and Deux-Ponts wrote that Washington's face beamed with delight, and a

child whose every wish had been gratified could not have expressed keener pleasure.

De Grasse was in command of twenty-eight ships of the line with six frigates, 1700 guns and 20,000 men. The British had to meet this force nineteen ships of the line with 1400 guns and 13,000 men. Thanks to France, Washington now held the strings which controlled the destiny of America. De Grasse brought from San Domingo 3200 French troops under the Marquis de Saint Simon. These were landed at once, and Saint Simon, although a field marshal, was glad to serve under Lafayette, who wrote, "The general and all the officers have cheerfully lived in the same way as our poorly provided American detachment." A correspondent said of the French force: "You have seen the British troops and the troops of other nations, but you have not seen troops so universally well made, so robust or of such an appearance." The regiments brought by Saint Simon were the Gatinais, Agenais and Touraine. Both Rochambeau and De Grasse exceeded their orders in their desire to aid our country. De Grasse brought every possible ship, so that the French fleet at Yorktown was the most powerful which up to that time had ever been fitted out by France. The flagship, the *Ville de Paris*, of three decks and 104 guns, was considered the finest afloat. De Grasse also brought 4,000,000 francs for Washington's army. Five days after the arrival of De Grasse, nineteen British men-of-war, under Admiral Graves, appeared off the bay. They had been sent by Clinton to intercept De Barras, who had sailed from Newport August 28th with eight ships of the line and fourteen transports, bringing Rochambeau's stores and siege guns. De Barras was the senior of De Grasse, but he waived his rank and risked his small fleet to make the voyage to the Chesapeake, and this is merely an example of the way in which the French in all departments of the service sacrificed their own individual interests to aid the American cause. Graves found De Grasse anchored

within the capes, and the French admiral at once put to sea in order to decoy the British away from the bay, so that the way might be clear for De Barras to slip in. An irregular fight followed, which lasted for five days, when De Grasse returned to the bay and found De Barras safely anchored within the capes. In this engagement the French lost 220 men killed and wounded, and the British 336, and one of their men-of-war, a seventy-four, had to be abandoned and burned. Graves, having failed utterly, returned to New York. The fleets of De Grasse and De Barras and the armies of Rochambeau and Washington had moved like clock-work; no storms marred their progress, no foe impeded their advance. The smoothness with which the forces of France and America worked together had not been equaled in the military history of the world, until we came to operations of the allies in France in the World War.

From September 9th to 11th Washington was at Mount Vernon for the first time since the war began. Here he entertained Rochambeau and other distinguished French officers. It is safe to say that these Frenchmen were the most welcome visitors who ever have been or who ever will be received at that shrine of humanity. September 18th, Washington, Rochambeau, Knox and Du Portail visited De Grasse on his flagship. At their departure De Grasse manned the yards of the whole fleet and fired salutes. September 28th Washington and his staff slept in an open field two miles from Yorktown without any other shelter than the canopy of heaven. Washington states in his diary: "September 20th the enemy abandoned all their exterior works and the position they had taken without the town and retired within their interior works of defense in the course of last night, immediately upon which we possssed them and made those on our left (with a little alteration) very serviceable to us. We also began two inclosed works on the right

of Pidgeon Hill, between that and the ravine above More's Hill."

October 6th. "Before morning the trenches were in such forwardness, as to cover the men from the enemy's fire. The work was executed with so much secrecy and dispatch that the enemy were, I believe, totally ignorant of our labor till the light of the morning discovered it to them."

October 9th Washington himself fired the first gun. Not less than 100 pieces of heavy ordnance were in continual operation, and the whole peninsula trembled. The French had brass cannon of from four to forty-eight pounds in abundance. Then, as now, French artillery was considered the best in Europe, but a few days later when the British officers complimented the French upon the efficiency of their gunnery, the French said that equal praise was due to the American fire. Washington records: "October 9—about 3 o'clock P. M. the French opened a battery on our extreme left of four sixteen-pounders and six mortars and howitzers—and at 5 o'clock an American battery of six 18's and 24's, four mortars and two howitzers began to play from the extremity of our right. October 10, the French opened two batteries on the left of our front parallel—and the Americans two batteries between those last mentioned and the one on our extreme right. October 11—The French opened two other batteries on the left of the parallel." On this day red-hot shots were fired, and the Charon and two transports were set on fire.

Washington wrote Congress, October 12th—"I cannot but acknowledge the infinite obligations I am under to his excellency, the Count de Rochambeau, the Marquis de Saint Simon, commanding the troops from the West Indies, the other general officers, and indeed, the officers of every denomination in the French army, for the assistance which they afford me. The experience of many of those gentlemen in the business before us is of the utmost advantage in the present operation.

The greatest harmony prevails between the two armies. They seem actuated by one spirit, that of supporting the honor of the allied armies."

The night of October 14th the bursting of six consecutive shells from the French batteries was the signal for an assault on the British works. Baron de Viomenil commanded the entire operation. The Americans under Lafayette stormed the left battery; the French Grenadiers led by Viomenil, the right redoubt. Lieutenant Colonel Gimat's battalion led the Americans, and Colonel Armand marched as a volunteer. Baron Viomenil, Marquis de Rostaing and Count de Deux-Ponts led the French, sword in hand. Colonel Deux-Ponts first mounted the ramparts and reached out his hand to assist a grenadier to follow, the man fell dead and the Colonel coolly extended his hand to a second. The allies lost about 500 men. In one charge the French grenadiers lost one-third of the men engaged.

Rochambeau says: "We must render to the Americans the justice to say that they comported themselves with a zeal, a courage and an emulation which never left them behind in any duty with which they were charged, although they were strangers to the operations of a siege." Washington wrote the President of Congress: "Nothing could equal this zeal of our allies but the emulating spirit of the American officers, whose ardor would not suffer their exertions to be exceeded." Washington's diary says: "October 16—About 4 o'clock this afternoon the French opened two batteries of two 24s and four 16s each. Three pieces from the American grand battery were also opened, the others not being ready. October 17—The French opened another battery of four 24s and two 16s, and a mortar battery of ten mortars and two howitzers, the American grand battery consisting of twelve 24s and eighteen 16s, four mortars and two howitzers."

When early in the morning of the 17th the American grand battery opened fire with great rapidity,

Knox, fearing that the ammunition would give out, send word to Lieutenant Colonel Stevens to husband his resources, but he replied that there was no need to fear, as our friends, the French, would make up all deficiencies from their ample supply. To one who is familiar with the way in which Washington's operations were hampered thruout the war by lack of ammunition, this incident epitomizes our debt to France. A few hours more of the fire of the French and American batteries would have annihilated the British force. October 19th the entire British force, naval and military, "surrendered themselves prisoners of war to the combined forces of America and France." The French army, drawn up in their brilliant uniforms, extended for more than a mile. Opposite them were the Americans. The uniforms of those who had had them were worn and tattered, but over them flew the Star-Spangled Banner, which that day took its real place among the flags of the independent nations of the earth. Between the allied lines marched the British army in new red coats, their colors cased and their band playing "The World's Turned Upside Down." The British general who represented Cornwallis offered his sword to Rochambeau, who said, "I pointed opposite to General Washington at the head of the American army, and I said that the French army, being auxiliary upon that continent, it was to the American general he must look for his orders."

Nothing in the war was received with such joy by the American people as the victory at Yorktown. The news was followed throughout the country by triumphant bonfires, illuminations, parades, orations and sermons. In Philadelphia the Continental Congress went in a body to church to a thanksgiving service. The victory was complete and final. The independence of the United States, which had been declared at Philadelphia, July 4, 1776, was achieved at Yorktown October 19, 1781. On that day a new nation was born and foreign domination was ended forever

in the United States. There is no brighter page in the history of the world. Yorktown was the capstone of the edifice of which Concord and Lexington, and Bunker Hill and Trenton, and Princeton and Monmouth were the foundations. England was quick to recognize that the war was over. The victory was almost as important in its results in the mother country as in America. The old fogies who had impeded progress were no longer tolerated, and forces were set at work and reforms were instituted which made England really self-governing. If it had not been for Yorktown we should have had a Hanoverian kaiser as well as a Hohenzollern. The freedom of Australia and Canada, no less than that of the United States, was won by America and France united at Yorktown. On the day Cornwallis surrendered, Washington gave as the parole "Independence" and as the countersign "Rochambeau and De Grasse." In 1783, on the anniversary of the French alliance, Washington's orderly book shows that the parole for the day was "America and France" and the countersign "United forever."

April 9, 1781, Washington wrote Colonel John Laurens, who had been sent over to obtain assistance from France: "If France delays a timely and powerful aid in the critical posture of our affairs, it will avail us nothing should she attempt it hereafter. We are at this hour suspended in the balance. Day does not follow night more certainly than it brings with it some additional proof of the impracticability of carrying on the war without the aids you were directed to solicit. As an honest and candid man, as a man whose all depends on the final and happy termination of the present contest, I assert this, while I give it decisively as my opinion that without a foreign loan our present force, which is but the remnant of an army, cannot be kept together this campaign, much less will it be increased and in readiness for another." Washington goes on to say that there is no money to

pay teamsters to carry provisions to the army, the troops are nearly naked, the hospitals without medicines and the sick without food except such as well men eat. "We are at the end of our tether, and now or never our deliverance must come."

Although France herself was in need, Laurens obtained from the French government a gift of 6,000,000 francs. He brought back a portion of this in hard cash and part he spent for arms, ammunition and clothing. Franklin wrote in a letter sent by Laurens: "This court continues firm and steady in its friendship and does everything it can for us. Cannot we do a little more for ourselves?"

Everything we needed in that supreme hour France gave us. She supplied us with money when our own currency was utterly worthless; she supplied ships, arms, ammunition, troops and heroic leaders like Rochambeau and De Grasse, whose memory will always be dear to the American people. To save America France had to bankrupt herself. Professor Marion, of the College of France, thinks that participation in our revolution cost France 2,000,000,000 francs. Pickering, who was Secretary of State in 1797, states that all the loans and supplies received from France during the war amounted to 53,000,000 francs. It should be kept in mind that the population of France was then but 22,000,000 and that the purchasing power of money was at least three times as great as now.

In the official list furnished by the French government are the names of 47,000 officers and men, of sixty-two vessels and thirteen regiments, who landed on our shores or cruised in our waters during our revolution. The greatest number ashore at one time was 8400. At Savannah the French lost 637 and at Yorktown 186. It is possible here to name but a few of the sons of France to whose efficient and unselfish services we owe so much. When skilled engineers were urgently needed Du Portail, Launoy, Radiere and Gouvion came to our

aid; officers who were esteemed in the French army and who combined practical ability with scientific training. They directed important works from 1777. Chevalier du Portail, who commanded the engineers at Yorktown, was made major general for his services at the siege on Washington's special recommendation. The death of Radiere in 1779 deprived America of his valuable services. M. de Gouvion, commandant of artillery and engineers, was distinguished at Yorktown and elsewhere. Launoy enjoyed the confidence and esteem of Washington. Fleury fought with such gallantry at Brandywine that Congress presented him with a horse in return for his own, which had been killed in battle, and he was conspicuous for his bravery at Germantown. At Fort Mifflin he was chief engineer during the six weeks of the siege. He was severely wounded and was promoted to lieutenant colonel for his courage and skill. At Stony Point he was the first to mount the ramparts, and seized and carried off the British flag, for which he received a medal from Congress. For his services at Yorktown he received from France the cross of St. Louis and a pension.

Washington speaks of the "great zeal, activity, vigilance, intelligence and courage" of the Chevalier Armand, Marquis de la Rouerie. In 1783 he was made brigadier general. Washington wrote the President of Congress January 13, 1778: "This will be delivered to you by the Chevalier Mauduit Duplessis, who was among the first French officers that joined the army of the United States. The gallant conduct of this young gentleman at Brandywine and Germantown, and his distinguished services at Fort Mercer, where he united the offices of engineer and commandant of artillery, entitle him to the particular notice of Congress. He made several judicious alterations in the works at Red Bank, showed great good conduct during the action in which the Hessians were repulsed, and was spoken of, in consequence, in terms of the highest applause by the commanding officer of the post. After the evacua-

tion was determined upon he became the means of saving some valuable artillery and stores, and cheerfully undertook as volunteer, the hazardous operation of blowing up the magazines without the apparatus usually provided upon such occasions. I must further add in Monsieur Duplessis's favor that he possesses a degree of modesty not always found in men who have performed brilliant actions."

M. Tousard, a French officer attached to Lafayette, rushed boldly forward in an attempt to capture a cannon on Rhode Island and was surrounded by British. His horse was killed under him, he lost his right arm, but he escaped capture. Congress made him brevet lieutenant colonel and gave him a life pension. La Perouse, the daring navigator and explorer, who in 1788 was lost at sea with his entire expedition, carried young Rochambeau back to France, he passing through the British blockading fleet in a storm, which carried away his mast. When Baron St. Ovary, who aided Lafayette in rallying the Americans, was taken prisoner at Brandywine, Congress called him "a gallant gentleman from France, engaged as a volunteer in the service of the United States, and lately, by the fortune of war, made prisoner by the British." Count Charles de Lameth was severely wounded at Yorktown. We are indebted to France for the valuable services of Steuben and De Kalb. The French minister of war, St. Germain, induced his old friend and companion in the army, Baron Steuben, to come to America to train Washington's army, and the French government made itself responsible for Steuben's expenses. He was a brave man, of great ability, who had seen long service under the greatest masters of military affairs of the time, and had been on the staff of Frederick the Great. It was on a ship provided by Beaumarchais that Steuben came, and Beaumarchais advanced to him 6000 francs for his outfit. In the ship were military stores and several French officers, among them L'Enfant, who later planned the city of Washing-

ton and remodeled the city hall in New York for the use of Congress. L'Enfant was wounded while he was leading the advance in Lincoln's assault on Savannah. He was captured at the siege of Charleston. Baron De Kalb, who was mortally wounded at Cowpens, had seen more than thirty years of military service before he came to America. His aide-de-camp, Chevalier Dubuysson, wrote that De Kalb withstood "with the brave Marylanders alone the furious charge of the whole British army; but superior bravery was obliged at length to yield to superior numbers, and the baron, having had his horse killed under him, fell into the hands of the enemy, pierced with eight wounds by bayonets and three musket balls. I stood by the baron during the action and shared his fate, being taken by his side, wounded in both arms and hands."

It will be necessary to devote a special section to the efficient and devoted services which Lafayette rendered to our country.

Rochambeau thus describes the meeting with the American forces when the first division of the French army, returning from the south, arrived at Kings Ferry, September 15, 1782: "General Washington, wishing to testify his respect for France and his recognition of the benefits she had rendered, caused us to pass between two lines of troops, clad, equipped and armed with clothing and arms from France, and from the English magazines taken at Yorktown, which the French army had relinquished to the Americans. He ordered the drums to beat a French march during the whole review, and the two armies rejoined with the most lively demonstrations of reciprocal satisfaction." The French army under Viomenil sailed for home from Boston December 24, 1782. Rochambeau, Chastellux and De Choisy sailed from Annapolis January 11, 1783. De Lauzun's troops sailed from the Delaware capes May 12, 1783, with some others who had been left by Rochambeau to remove artillery and stores from Yorktown.

The letters which were exchanged between Washington and our French allies are creditable to both nations, for they are the words of high-minded men who had made common cause for humanity. They are more than mere expressions of courtesy, they are warm with real emotion. As Rochambeau was on the point of sailing for France Washington wrote him: "I cannot permit you to depart from this country without repeating to you the high sense I entertain of the services you have rendered to America, by the constant attention which you have paid to the interest of it, by the exact order and discipline of the corps under your command, and by your readiness at all times to give facility to every measure which the force of the combined armies were competent to." The Maryland Assembly sent Rochambeau an address which stated: "We view with regret the departure of troops which have so conducted, so endeared, and so distinguished themselves, and we pray that the laurels they have gathered before Yorktown may never fade, and that victory to whatever quarter of the globe they direct their arms, may follow their standard."

On the first anniversary of Yorktown Washington gave a dinner to the French officers who were sailing three days later and were never to see him again. Clousen says: "There is no sort of kindness and tokens of goodwill we have not received from General Washington; the idea of parting from the French army, probably forever, seemed to cause him real sorrow, having, as he had, received the most convincing proofs of the respect, the veneration, the esteem, and even the attachment which every individual in the army felt for him." Luzerne wrote Washington: "I cannot deny myself the pleasure of informing you of the sentiments with which the reports of the French officers, on their return to Versailles, inspired the court and nation toward your excellency. Their testimony can add nothing to the universal opinion respecting the great services which you have rendered to your coun-

try, but, to the esteem and admiration of the French, will henceforth be added a sentiment of affection and attachment which is a just return for the attentions our officers have received from you, and for the progress they have made in their profession by serving under your orders."

Washington wrote Baron Antoine Viomenil, who was second in command to Rochambeau, December 7, 1782: "The many great and amiable qualities which you possess have inspired me with the greatest sentiments of esteem for your character." Baron Viomenil replied: "The veneration with which this army was penetrated from the first moment they had the honor of being presented to your excellency by Comte de Rochambeau, their confidence in your talents and the wisdom of your orders, the remembrance of your kindness and attention and the example you set them in every critical circumstance, the approbation, regret and wishes you have honored them with at their departure; these are considerations by which you may be assured there is not an individual officer in this army who is not sensibly touched as he is flattered by your approbation." Antoine Viomenil was mortally wounded defending the royal family in the attack on the Tuilleries. His brother, Charles Joseph Viomenil, was afterward governor of Martinique and a marshal of France.

December 14, 1782, Washington wrote Chastellux: "A sense of your public services to this country and gratitude for your private friendship quite overcame me at the moment of our separation. But I should do violence to my feelings and inclination were I to suffer you to leave this country without the warmest assurances of an affectionate regard for your person and character." Washington wrote Lauzun May 10, 1783: "Your particular services, sir, with the politeness, zeal and attention which I have ever experienced from you, have made a deep and lasting impression on my mind and will serve to endear you to my remem-

brance. It would have been a great satisfaction to have had another opportunity to give you in person the assurances of my regard could your orders have permitted your longer continuance in the country."

Rochambeau wrote of Washington: "From the moment we began to correspond with one another I never ceased to enjoy the soundness of his judgment and the amenity of his style in a very long correspondence which is likely not to end before the death of one of us."

May 10, 1783, Washington wrote Rochambeau: "To the generous help of your nation and to the bravery of her forces must be attributed, to a very large extent, that independence for which we have striven and which, after a severe contest of more than seven years, we have secured. The first wish of my heart is to pay the tribute of respect to a country to which, by public and private considerations, I feel myself attached by the most affectionate ties." As I have been unable to obtain the original of this letter, I am retranslating it from the French. July 13, 1783, Rochambeau wrote Washington: "I see you at the glorious end of all your toils and with the desire to come to France. Try, my dear general, to effectuate this project. Let nothing oppose itself to the idea. Come and receive in a country which honors you and which has admired you the plaudits due to a great man. You may be assured of a reception without example. You will be received as you desire to be, after a revolution which has not its like in history. Everybody smiles already at the hopes you give me in your letter, and my heart beats with pleasure at the thought of embracing you once more.

"It seems to me you should embark about the beginning of October, so as to be here about the beginning of November. You will then find the court returned from Fontainebleau. You will pass your winter in the midst of the gayeties of Paris and Versailles, and in the spring we will carry you to our country

seats. Come, my dear general, and satisfy the desires of a nation whose hearts are already yours."

Washington wrote Rochambeau February 1, 1784, these words, which have been placed on the pedestal of the statue of Rochambeau in Washington: "We have been contemporaries and fellow-workers in the cause of liberty and we have lived together as brothers should do in harmonious friendship." Washington wrote Rochambeau from Mount Vernon that he was engaged "in rural employments and in contemplation of those friendships which the revolution enabled me to form with so many worthy characters of your nation, through whose assistance I can now sit down in my calm retreat." In 1786 Washington wrote Rochambeau: "The sincerity, honor and bravery of your troops, the high-minded patriotism and the delicate sympathy which animate so many of your compatriots, with whom, I venture to say, I am intimately acquainted, and, above all, the keen interest which your illustrious monarch and his loyal subjects have taken in the success of the American cause and in the development of our independence, have made your nation very dear to me and have formed ties and left us impressions which neither time nor circumstances can destroy." In 1789 Rochambeau was made governor of Alsace. He also became marshal of France, and Napoleon gave him a pension and the grand cross of the Legion of Honor.

The key of the Bastille, now at Mount Vernon, was sent to Washington by Lafayette, who wrote: "It is a tribute which I owe as a son to my adopted father, as an aide-de-camp to my general, as a missionary of liberty to its patriarch." The French Convention in 1792 conferred on Washington the title of citizen of France because he was "one of the benefactors of mankind." As a sacred emblem of liberty the American flag was displayed in the hall where the convention met. French officers presented Mrs. Washington with a dinner service, each piece with her

initials in the center. On the news of Washington's death, the French republic went into mourning. Officers wore crape for ten days, flags were half masted and Bonaparte issued a proclamation in which he said: "Washington is dead. This great man fought tyranny. He established on a safe basis the liberty of his country. His memory will ever be dear to the French people, as well as to all the free men of the two worlds, and especially to French soldiers." In the presence of Napoleon the celebrated orator Fontanes delivered at the Invalides a funeral eulogy, in which he said: "Washington's work is scarcely perfected and it is already surrounded by that veneration that is usually bestowed only on what has been consecrated by time. The American revolution, of which we are contemporaries, seems now consolidated forever. Washington began it by his energy and achieved it by his moderation. In rendering a public homage to Washington, France pays a debt to him by the two worlds."

The Frenchman Houdon has given us in his statue what is acknowledged to be the best likeness of Washington. It is to Houdon's everlasting credit that he insisted on braving the perils of the ocean in order that he might do his work from life in the most perfect manner. Houdon's statue of Washington is not the least of the debts we owe to France. I have studied most of the galleries of Europe and I doubt if there is another work of art in the world in which historic interest is so combined with artistic excellence. The descriptions of Washington, which have been left us by the soldier authors of France who knew and loved him, are numerous and appreciative.

We hear so much about the soldiers of France that her sailors are sometimes overlooked. Among them were great men who rendered inestimable services to our country. Where can we find in history another instance of an admiral like D'Estaing leading his forces in a land attack and being twice wounded? Those who served under De Grasse said: "Our admiral is six feet high on ordinary days and six feet six on battle days."

Paul Jones wrote Silas Deane of the exchange of salutes for the first time between "Freedom's Flag and that of France," February 14, 1778, at Quibeeon Bay, and he added: "The French squadron is officered by a well-bred set of men, all of whom have visited the Ranger and expressed great satisfaction, calling her 'un parfait Bijou'; when we visited their ships we were received with every mark of respect and gladness and saluted with a 'feu de joie'."

The only time Washington had control of the sea was at Yorktown, and he put an end to the war there. If he had controlled the sea at Boston, he could have ended it five years sooner, but we had no French allies at Boston. France was acknowledged to be the most powerful country in the world on land, and in 1781 was able to dispute the control of the sea with Britain. Washington called the French fleet "the most numerous and powerful that ever appeared in these seas." The French navy was charged not only with carrying on the war by sea with the greatest naval power in the world, but also with the transportation of troops and supplies. The services which France had to render in taking up our cause include not only the naval and military forces sent to our shores, but also the protection of her own ports and colonies against powerful fleets and operations in Europe, Africa and Asia. On the other hand, when France came into the war, England had to protect her possessions, in the West Indies, Africa and India and on the Mediterranean. If it had not been for Warren Hastings she might have lost India.

It is among the proudest achievements of our nation that we have now proved that we are not unworthy of all that France has done for us. I do not know a man in the United States army who would not have gone over to fight for France, if it had been in his power to get there. Perilous seas divided, but thanks to our efficient navy, a thousand leagues of water could not separate us, and American blood has mingled with

French blood to liberate and to consecrate the soil of France. New glory has been added to Old Glory. The red, white and blue of the flags of America and of France have been united in battle and are now united in victory. As France came in our hour of supreme need and exerted the determining influence when our armies had been struggling for years in the American revolution, so America has been privileged to provide in France the determining influence in the world war. Lafayette wrote of the American revolution, "Never had so noble a purpose offered itself to the judgment of men! This was the last struggle of liberty; its defeat then would have left it without a refuge and without hope." These words also exactly describe the situation in France when America entered the World War. As Lafayette counted it the greatest honor of his distinguished life to have served under Washington, so Pershing has been proud to serve under Foch. "Lafayette, we're here," is with one exception the most practically eloquent speech that I know. It is comparable to the speech that Washington made in Virginia at the beginning of the revolution. "I will raise a thousand men at my own expense and march at their head to the relief of Boston."

I have now told the wonderful story of what France, our ancient ally, did for us at a time when no one else would help us. Washington wrote Luzerne March 29, 1783—"The articles of the general treaty do not appear so favorable to France, in point of territorial acquisitions, as they do to other powers. But the magnanimous and disinterested scale of action, which that great nation has exhibited to the world during this war, and at the conclusion of peace, will insure to the king and nation that reputation, which will be of more consequence to them than every other consideration." Washington's farsighted vision has proved correct in this, as in so many other instances. Washington wrote D'Estaing: "The welfare of the French nation cannot but be dear to this country, and that its

happiness may in the end be established on the most permanent and liberal foundation is the ardent wish of every true American."

As long as the children of America have a morsel of bread they should share it with the orphans of France. Our army and our navy have done their part nobly to repay our debt to France. What are the people of America going to do?

II

WHAT LAFAYETTE DID FOR AMERICA

In justice to the memory of Lafayette it is necessary that a statement should be made of the priceless services which he rendered to our country in its time of utmost need, for that there is an astonishing misunderstanding of them is shown in an article in a prominent magazine which states: "He was never a great fighter, and his military career in America, though respectable, was not distinguished. It is hard to know what peculiar and signal service he rendered." Lafayette voiced the spirit of France when he wrote: "The moment I heard of America I loved her; the moment I knew she was fighting for freedom, I burned with a desire of bleeding for her; and the moment I shall be able to serve her, at any time or in any part of the world, will be the happiest one of my

life." Lafayette became the living expression of the beautiful soul of France. He was honorable, chivalrous and of noble birth; a warrior by heredity and training, his father had died gloriously at the age of twenty-five at the head of his regiment on the field of battle. Young Lafayette was lieutenant in a crack regiment and had been well drilled in the rudiments of his profession. His stubbornness—or shall we say pertinacity—made him stick to his purpose of coming to our aid in spite of all the obstacles which a government as yet neutral was forced to put in his way. The marquis was nearly six feet tall, with broad shoulders, high forehead and beautiful hazel eyes. He wrote: "In presenting my 19-year-old face to Mr. Deane I spoke more of my zeal than of my experience," and he added, "It is precisely in time of danger that I wish to share whatever fortune may have in store for you." The only reward which he asked for his services was to be enrolled as an American soldier under General Washington.

Lafayette had a yearly income of 200,000 francs, equal in purchasing power to at least \$100,000 at the present time. He left his wife and child, bought a ship, and in order to buy the ship he had to buy its cargo. He brought with him to America De Kalb and twelve other officers, one of whom was Colonel de Valfort, who later, as director of the military school at Brienne, became the chief instructor of Napoleon Bonaparte. On the voyage Lafayette wrote his wife that he thought his service under Washington would be "a brevet of immortality. The happiness of America is intimately connected with the happiness of all mankind; she is destined to become the safe and venerable asylum of virtue, of honesty, of tolerance, of equality and of peaceful liberty." It took them fifty-four days to make the voyage to South Carolina, and thirty-two more to journey on horseback to Philadelphia, where, at a public dinner, early in August, 1777, Lafayette first met Washington. He writes: "Although

he was surrounded by officers and citizens it was impossible to mistake for a moment his majestic figure and deportment; nor was he less distinguished by the noble affability of his manner." The day after this dinner Washington invited Lafayette to go with him to inspect the forts on the Delaware.

Although less than twenty, Lafayette was commissioned major general by Congress July 31, 1777.

The Journal of Congress thus records his appointment: "Whereas the Marquis of Lafayette, out of his great zeal to the cause of liberty, in which the United States are engaged, has left his family and connexions, and at his own expense, come over to offer his services to the United States, without pension or particular allowance, and is anxious to risk his life in our cause; Resolved, That his service be accepted, and that in consideration of his zeal, his illustrious family and connexions, he have the rank and commission of major general in the army of the United States."

Lafayette soon won the affection and respect of the American army by his bravery and self-denial. He had to work hard; every one did who served under Washington; but, though brought up in luxury, no fatigue was too great for him to endure. He wrote: "I study, I read, I examine, I listen, I reflect, and upon the result of all this I make an effort to form an opinion, and to put into it as much common sense as I can. I am cautious not to talk much, lest I should say some foolish thing, and still more cautious in my actions, lest I should do some foolish thing, for I do not wish to disappoint the confidence that the Americans have so kindly placed in me." Three weeks after he met Washington, Lafayette wrote his wife: "This excellent man, whose talents and virtues I admired, and whom I have learned to revere as I know him better, has now become my intimate friend; his affectionate interest in me instantly won my heart. I am established in his house, and we live together like two attached brothers with mutual confidence and cordial-

ity. This friendship renders me as happy as I can possibly be in this country." Lafayette wrote his father-in-law: "Our general is a man truly made for this revolution, which could not be successfully accomplished without him. I see him nearer than any other man in the world; and I see that he is worthy of the adoration of his country. His warm friendship and his entire confidence in me in regard to all military and political subjects, great and small, that occupy him, place me in a situation to judge of all that he has to perform, to reconcile and to overcome. I admire him more each day for the beauty of his character and of his mind." Letters like this had great influence in France.

Lafayette wrote Washington: "The only favor I have asked of your commissioner in France has been, not to be under any orders but those of General Washington. I seem to have had an anticipation of our future friendship; and what I have done out of esteem and respect for your excellency's name and reputation I should do now for mere love for General Washington himself. Anything, my dear general, you will order or even wish, shall always be infinitely agreeable to me, and I will always feel happy in doing anything which may please you, or forward the public good."

September 11, 1777, at the Battle of the Brandywine, when the Americans were making a disorderly retreat, Lafayette dismounted, and while bravely striving to re-form them, a bullet passed through his leg, but he carried on until the blood was flowing from his boot and he had to be removed from the field. He wrote to his wife: "The honor to have mingled my blood with that of many other American soldiers on the heights of the Brandywine has been to me a source of pride and delight." Of Washington's affectionate interest at this time Lafayette wrote: "When he sent his surgeon-in-chief to me, he directed him to care for me as if I were his son, because he loved me as much; and, having heard that I wanted to join the army too

soon again he wrote a letter full of tenderness, in which he admonished me to wait until I should be entirely well." Lafayette went back to the army about October 20th, before he was able to wear a boot. Count Dumas, aide to General Rochambeau, records that more than three years later, in January, 1781, when a number of French gentlemen were visiting West Point, General Washington perceived, as they were about to mount their horses, that Lafayette, in consequence of his old wound received at the battle of the Brandywine, was very much fatigued, and on that account they returned to headquarters by boat. When Lafayette was ill, Washington rode the eight miles from headquarters to Fishkill every day for three weeks to ask after him, though the commander-in-chief was not allowed to see him till he was better.

Of an engagement near Gloucester, N. J., late in November, 1777, General Greene wrote Washington: "The marquis, with about 400 militia and the rifle corps, attacked the enemy's picket last evening, killed about twenty, wounded many more and took about twenty prisoners. The marquis is charmed with the spirited behavior of the militia and rifle corps; they drove the enemy about half a mile, and kept the ground until dark. The enemy's picket consisted of about 300, and were reinforced during the skirmish. The marquis is determined to be in the way of danger." December 1, 1777, Lafayette was assigned to the command of a division. This was one of the four divisions at Valley Forge, where he outwitted the enemy when they had his force nearly surrounded at Barren Hill. Of this engagement Washington wrote: "The marquis, by depending on the militia to patrol the roads to his left, had very nearly been caught in a snare—in fact, he was in it, but by his own dexterity or by the enemy's want of it, he disengaged himself in a very soldierly manner, and by an orderly and well-conducted retreat got out." Lafayette wrote of Valley Forge: "The patient endurance of both soldiers and officers was a

miracle which every moment serves to renew; but the sacred fire of liberty was not extinguished."

Washington's success was largely due to the fact that he was an accurate judge of men; his estimate of Lafayette is: "He possesses uncommon military talents—is of a quick and sound judgment, persevering and enterprising without rashness." Washington also wrote: "He unites to all the military fire of youth an uncommon maturity of judgment." When the enemies of Washington were dining at York while the General and his army were suffering at Valley Forge, Lafayette, who happened to be present, rose and reminded the party that there was one toast they had omitted, and then gave, "The Commander-in-chief." There is something superbly courageous in this French boy thus correcting those who were superior to him in age, but not in loyalty. Lafayette wrote Steuben with regard to Washington: "No enemies to that great man can be found, except among the enemies of his country; nor is it possible for a man of a loving spirit to refrain from loving the excellent qualities of his heart. I think I know him as well as any person, and such is the idea which I have formed of him. His honesty, his frankness, his sensibility, his virtue to the full extent in which this word can be understood, are above all praise. It is not for me to judge of his military talents; but according to my imperfect knowledge of these matters, his advice in council has always appeared the best, although his modesty prevents him sometimes from sustaining it, and his predictions have generally been fulfilled."

Washington loved Lafayette best of all men, and those who consider his nature cold should read his letters to the young Frenchman. He wrote Lafayette: "The sentiments of affection and attachment, which breathe so conspicuously in all your letters to me, are at once pleasing and honorable, and afford me abundant cause to rejoice at the happiness of my acquaintance with you. Your love of liberty, the just sense you

entertain of this valuable blessing, and your noble and disinterested exertions in the cause of it, added to the innate goodness of your heart, conspire to render you dear to me; and I think myself happy in being linked with you in bonds of the strictest friendship."

In 1779, Lafayette returned to France on a furlough, and in a letter to Franklin, who was representing America in France, Washington thus sums up Lafayette's services to our country up to that time: "The generous motives which first induced him to cross the Atlantic; the tribute which he paid to gallantry at the Brandywine; his success in Jersey before he had recovered from his wounds, in an affair where he commanded militia against British grenadiers; the brilliant retreat, by which he eluded a combined maneuver of the whole British force in the last campaign; the services in the enterprise against Rhode Island, are such proofs of his zeal, military ardor and talents as have endeared him to America." Washington does not mention here the efficient work of Lafayette in the pursuit of the British through New Jersey which culminated in the battle of Monmouth, where victory was snatched from our arms by the treason of Charles Lee.

When Lafayette first went to America he was obliged to sail secretly, because France was not yet at war with Great Britain. On his return to his native land, Lafayette was the hero of the hour and the recognized authority on American military affairs with the French government. Duniol, who has written the most important work on the relations between France and America, says that Vergennes, the French minister of foreign affairs, had yielded like Washington, to the charm of Lafayette, whose sagacity and clearness of vision, combined with his youth and enthusiasm, had made as great an impression at Versailles as they had with the army of the United States and with Congress. The services which Lafayette rendered to our country on this visit are by far the most important of his life, for it was largely due to his persistence that

France sent such powerful forces under Rochambeau and De Grasse that the war was brought to a victorious end at Yorktown, and it was at Lafayette's suggestion that the order was given that French forces should yield precedence to the American troops. I cite the following authorities to show the recognized importance of the work which Lafayette did for the United States at this time. Hon. Charlemagne Tower states that Lafayette's incessant presentation of the American cause to the cabinet of King Louis XVI, and particularly to the Comte de Vergennes and the Comte de Maurepas, had an influence which contributed very greatly to the ultimate establishment of independence in the United States.

Edward Everett wrote: "Considerable discontent had arisen in connection with Count d'Estaing's movements in Rhode Island, which had it not been allayed by the prudent and effectual mediation of Lafayette would probably have prevented a French army from being sent over to the United States. He pursued the object with an ardor, an industry and adroitness which nothing could surpass. When his correspondence with the French ministers, particularly the Count de Vergennes, shall be published it will appear that it was mainly the personal efforts and personal influence of Lafayette, idol of the French people as he had made himself, which caused the army of Rochambeau to be sent to America."

Sparks, who knew Lafayette personally, comments on Everett's statement: "This is an accurate view of facts. By repeated conferences with the ministers, by unwearied zeal and unceasing solicitation, he at length roused the attention of the French court, and accomplished his purpose; taking upon himself the entire responsibility in regard to America, and to the manner in which the army would be received by the people. The event showed with how much discrimination he had studied their character." As a small specimen of Lafayette's important work I submit the following ex-

tract from a letter which he wrote Vergennes May 20, 1780: "Without being prejudiced, sir, by the affectionate friendship which attaches me to General Washington, I can answer for it that the French generals and troops will have nothing but praise for his uprightness, for his delicacy, for that frank and noble politeness which characterizes him; whilst at the same time they will admire his great qualities." Such was the impression which Lafayette had made in France that La Touche-Treville, commander of the Hermione, on which his government sent the marquis back to America, who is described by Rochambeau as a man distinguished by his zeal, valor, talents and nobility of character, when he received his instructions replied: "I shall show to the Marquis de La Fayette all the respect and consideration which are prescribed not only by your orders to me, but by the dictates of my own heart toward a man whose acts have inspired me with the greatest desire to know him. I consider it a favor that an opportunity has been given me to prove the high esteem in which I hold him."

On his arrival in Boston April 28, 1780, Lafayette had a triumphant reception. Washington wrote to Luzerne, the minister of France to the United States: "You will participate in the joy I feel at the arrival of the Marquis de Lafayette. No event could have given me greater pleasure on a personal account, and motives of public utility conspire to make it agreeable. He announces a fresh and striking instance of the friendship of your court, which cannot fail to contribute greatly to perpetuate the gratitude of this country." Washington wrote Congress: "During the time he has been in France he has uniformly manifested the same zeal in our affairs which animated his conduct while he was among us; and he has been on all occasions an essential friend to America." Lafayette wrote the president of Congress: "If from an early epoch in our noble contest I gloried in the name of an American soldier and heartily enjoyed the honors I have of serv-

ing the United States, my satisfaction is at this long-wished for moment entirely complete—when putting an end to my furlough, I have been able again to join my colors, under which I may hope for opportunities of indulging the ardent zeal, the unbounded gratitude, the warm, and, I might say, the patriotic love by which I am forever bound to America.” Lafayette had purchased in France with his own money a large quantity of clothing and arms, which he distributed to his men, so that his command was the best dressed in the American army. When the allied generals met at Hartford, as Washington could not speak French and Rochambeau knew no English, Lafayette acted as interpreter. When Lafayette borrowed 2000 guineas from the merchants of Baltimore to clothe his men in 1781, Washington wrote him: “The measures you had taken to obtain, on your own credit, a supply of clothing and necessaries for the detachment must entitle you to all their gratitude and affection, and will, at the same time that it endears your name, if possible, still more to this country, be an everlasting monument of your ardent zeal and attachment to its cause and the establishment of its independence. For my own part, my dear marquis, although I stood in need of no new proofs of your exertions and your sacrifices in the cause of America, I will confess to you that I shall not be able to express the pleasing sensations I have experienced at your unparalleled and repeated instances of generosity and zeal for the service on every occasion.”

Lafayette’s brilliant campaign in Virginia in 1781 resulted in the penning up of Cornwallis at Yorktown. Of the battle of Green Spring, during these operations, Anthony Wayne, writing from near Jamestown, July 8, 1781, says: “Our field officers were generally dismounted by having their horses either killed or wounded under them. I will not condole with the marquis for the loss of two of his, as he was frequently requested to keep at a greater distance. His

native bravery rendered him deaf to the admonition." No man who served under Washington was braver than Anthony Wayne, and his opinion with regard to the courage of Lafayette must be considered that of an expert.

Let us see now what the historians think of the importance of this campaign and of the military skill with which Lafayette carried it on: Fiske remarks that throughout the game of strategy in Virginia Lafayette proved himself a worthy antagonist for the ablest of the British generals. Charlemagne Tower says that Lafayette "manoeuvred with such caution and such good judgment through Virginia, back and forth across its innumerable rivers and smaller streams, annoying the enemy, keeping out of their way, harassing their rear and yet preventing them from establishing themselves that Lord Cornwallis was forced to retire toward the coast in order to strengthen his army before undertaking what he called 'solid operations.' During a difficult campaign Lafayette had made no serious mistakes. By his untiring energy and courage he had animated the Virginians to renewed efforts; he had protected their property, and, having kept his army intact, he barred the way by land by which Cornwallis might escape from his perilous situation." Lafayette had forced Cornwallis into a neck of land surrounded by deep water. This afforded one of the greatest opportunities in the history of the world, and it was made possible by a Frenchman on land and a Frenchman on water. That Lafayette held the key to the military situation in America and the great confidence which was felt in him are shown by the instructions which Washington sent him on August 21st: "As it will be of great importance toward the success of our present enterprise that the enemy on the arrival of the fleet should not have it in their power to effect their retreat, I cannot omit to repeat to you my most earnest wish that the land and naval forces which you have with you may so combine their

operations that the British army may not be able to escape. The particular mode of doing this I shall not at this distance attempt to dictate. Your own knowledge of the country, from your long continuance in it and the various and extended movements which you have made, have given you great opportunities for observation, of which I am persuaded your military genius and judgment will lead you to make the best improvement." How efficiently Lafayette did this work is clear from the following extract from a letter which he wrote Washington September 1st: "I hope you will find that we have taken the best precautions to lessen his lordship's chances to escape. He has a few left, but so very precarious that I hardly believe he will make the attempt. If he does, he must give up ships, artillery, baggage, part of the horses, all the negroes; he must be certain to lose the third of his army and run the greatest risk to lose the whole without gaining that glory which he may derive from a brilliant siege." The fleet of De Grasse brought more than 3000 regulars with formidable artillery under the Marquis de Saint Simon, who, although a field marshal, was willing to serve under Lafayette, and that Lafayette was equally regardless of his own rank is shown by the following: From near Williamsburg, September 8th, Lafayette wrote Washington: "The French troops, my dear general, have landed with amazing celerity; they have already been wanting flour, meat and salt, not so much, however, as to be one day without. I have been night and day with the quartermaster collector, and have drawn myself into a violent headache and fever, which will go off with three hours' sleep, the want of which has occasioned it."

De Grasse and Saint Simon were anxious to return as quickly as possible to the West Indies and demanded that Lafayette should attack Cornwallis at once, the admiral offering to send in addition to all his marines as many sailors as Lafayette might wish. This would have given a sufficient force to capture

Cornwallis before the arrival of Washington. Mr. Tower says: "There is no doubt that the attachment of the Marquis de Lafayette to General Washington and his tenacity at this juncture preserved for the great American commander the glory of laying out and executing the plans of the Yorktown campaign. It is one of the finest examples of Lafayette's personal loyalty and unselfishness, of which he gave so many during his service in the revolutionary war. In the absence of instructions, and believing that the combined forces in Virginia were fully equal to the reduction of Lord Cornwallis, they wished to proceed. But Lafayette was the major general commanding, and he stood firm in his decision to await the arrival of his chief, his patron and his steadfast friend." On the arrival of Washington, September 14th, Lafayette's independent command terminated, and he resumed his position as major general commanding a division of continental light infantry, and, as he had uniformly done, he exerted a powerful influence in maintaining the harmonious co-operation of the allied forces. If it had not been for Lafayette's personal efforts with De Grasse at this time it is not unlikely that the French admiral would have put to sea with his fleet and our independence might never have been established. Lafayette spent his twenty-fourth birthday at the siege of Yorktown. October 14th Washington ordered the works of Cornwallis to be assaulted by two detachments of picked men, one of French under Viomenil and the other of Americans under Lafayette. Viomenil expressed doubts as to whether the Americans would be equal to the work, but they charged with the bayonet and without firing a shot captured their redoubt with many prisoners, including Major Campbell, while the forces of Viomenil were still struggling with the redoubt assigned to them. Lafayette had the satisfaction of sending a message to Viomenil asking if he required the assistance of his Americans. At the surrender of Cornwallis, Lafayette was at the

side of Washington among his beloved Americans and not with his own illustrious fellow-countrymen. The first news of the signing of a general treaty of peace at Paris on January 20, 1783, was brought to America by a French man-of-war, the *Triumph*, sent by Lafayette from D'Estaing's fleet at Cadiz. She reached Philadelphia March 23d, and brought the President of Congress the following letter from Lafayette:

"Having been at some pains to engage a vessel to go to Philadelphia, I now find myself happily relieved by the kindness of Count D'Estaing. He is just now pleased to tell me that he will dispatch a French ship, and, by way of compliment on the occasion, he has made choice of the *Triumph*, so that I am not without hopes of giving Congress the first tidings of a general peace, and I am happy in the smallest opportunity of doing anything that may prove agreeable to America."

Washington wrote Lafayette April 5, 1783, that his letter of February 5th, from Cadiz, was the only news of peace yet received: "My mind upon the receipt of this news was instantly assailed by a thousand ideas, all of them contending for pre-eminence, but, believe me, my dear friend, none could supplant or ever will eradicate that gratitude which has arisen from a lively sense of the conduct of your nation and from my obligations to many of the illustrious characters of it, among whom I do not mean to flatter when I place you at the head." In 1783 Lafayette went to Madrid and had an important interview with the King of Spain and his chief minister, and succeeded in procuring the recognition of the charge d'affairs of the United States. In 1784 Lafayette spent nearly five months in America, and in 1824 and 1825 toured the United States for more than a year as the nation's guest. He spent the forty-third anniversary of the surrender at Yorktown; he laid the cornerstone of the Bunker Hill monument, and our government sent him

home in a new frigate, appropriately called the Brandywine. At a dinner on his departure Lafayette gave as a toast, "Enfranchised Europe." He named his only son George Washington and one of his daughters Virginia. He was the last surviving general of our Revolution. When, in 1834, President Andrew Jackson learned of the death of Lafayette he ordered that "the same honors be rendered upon this occasion at the different military and naval stations as were observed upon the decease of Washington, the father of his country and his contemporary in arms."

Lafayette occupies a unique place in our history and in our hearts. No foreigner and but few of our own nation have been so dear to us. President Poincare has written this inscription for the statue of Lafayette in Baltimore:

"In 1777 Lafayette, crossing the seas with French volunteers, came to bring brotherly help to the American people, who were fighting for their national liberty.

"In 1917 France was fighting, in her turn, to defend her life and the liberty of the world. America, who had never forgotten Lafayette, crossed the seas to help France, and the world was saved."







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